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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—Extensions of Remarks

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INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE IMPOSITION OF AN OIL IMPORT FEE

HON. SILVIO O. CONTE

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 1983

● Mr. CONTE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing on behalf of myself and many other notable Members a resolution expressing the opposition of the House of Representatives to the imposition of an import tax on crude oil and refined petroleum products as a means of raising revenues. I am also pleased to report that Secretary of the Department of Energy Edwards in a letter dated April 14, 1982, stated to me that he, too, opposes such a proposal. He states:

Our past experience with quotas, taxes, price controls, and entitlements have taught us, at the very least, that we must make every effort to avoid such a course.

Now, as the administration and the Congress contemplate negotiating the details of the fiscal 1984 budget, discussions regarding a "quick fix" solution to raise revenues persist. One such proposal which has reared its ugly head is the most regressive, penny-wise and pound-foolish concept imaginable: an oil import fee on crude oil and products. Lest you characterize my efforts here today—and those of my colleagues from the Northeast who have joined me in cosponsoring this resolution—as an attempt by the Northeast to avoid paying for its energy needs, I suggest that you consider the results of the study prepared by the Congressional Research Service on the dire impact on the economy if a \$5 per barrel fee were to be imposed. The bottom line is that the effect of such a fee will reverberate throughout all sectors of our economy. No family will be spared the impact of the fee as the price of domestically produced crude oil rises to the level of the artificially priced imports. The price of gasoline and home heating oil will increase by 12 cents per gallon; residents will witness an increase in their electric utility costs of approximately \$100 per month in some sections of our country.

The residual effect of a \$5 per barrel tax is ominous—not only will the price of all petroleum products increase by 10 to 15 percent, but the already depressed housing industry will be devastated; the already ailing automobile industry will be devastated; the already distressed agriculture industry will be devastated. The list is endless.

In fact, many of those recipients of social security will have wiped out whatever benefits are protected by budget negotiators in this latest round of "revenue raising roulette." In addition, the CRS study estimates that a \$5 tax will cause unemployment to rise by another 96,000 workers in 1984; real gross national product will decline by

1.4 percent; and inflation to increase by 1.5 percent in 1984. All this is expected to occur while domestic oil producers are reaping another \$10 to \$15 billion in additional net profits.

One of the most telling statistics, however, in this high-risk game of chance is that with a \$5 per barrel tax, the Federal deficit will be reduced by \$4 to \$9 billion in fiscal year 1984. It may, however, increase the deficit by \$5 billion in fiscal year 1985, as the economy slows down as a direct result of Uncle Sam's self-imposed "oil shock."

Mr. Speaker, it is painfully obvious that there are available more progressive, more efficient revenue-raising options.

The cosponsors of this measure find it unconscionable to levy this tax on our economy and thus on the consumers of this Nation; particularly while they are enduring the present economic situation.

Therefore, I hope that Members from all regions of the country will realize the wisdom of this resolution. Send a message to the President before he comes up here later this month for the state of the Union address and proposes this nonsense. Send a message to the administration and Members of Congress who are feverishly drafting a budget plan that we oppose this foolishness, and cosponsor the resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. ●

HR 13

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE REVITALIZATION ACT, H.R. 13

HON. STEWART B. MCKINNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 1983

● Mr. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, January 3, 1983, I introduced H.R. 13, the Defense Industrial Base Revitalization Act. The bill is identical to H.R. 5540 as reported by the Banking Committee last May. For more information about our committee's action I refer my colleagues to House Report 97-530, parts II and III.

Although the committee-reported bill was debated on the House floor and some amendments were adopted, I chose to reintroduce the unamended version in this Congress. I think that it is not necessary for the committee to go back to square 1 to judge the merits of this proposal: the hearing record that was developed during the 97th Congress sufficiently supports the need for the bill.

The Banking Committee should consider the amendments offered by our colleagues, as well as those that were going to be offered, to determine how H.R. 13 should be improved. And then I would urge prompt referral of the legislation to the full House for speedy passage.

I supported a number of the adopted amendments and would urge their in-

clusion again. But the Banking Committee can consider also the numerous other amendments to H.R. 5540 that were pending and help expedite further consideration when this proposal comes before the House.

Mr. Speaker, the Defense Industrial Base Revitalization Act in the 97th Congress had an impressive list of bipartisan cosponsors as well as an equally impressive list of supporting groups representing labor, business, education, defense, manufacturing, mining and mineral sectors of the economy. I expect to see the same support rally behind H.R. 13.

This bill should be recognized for its merits. It is an economic stimulus program; it is a jobs program; it is a defense program; it is a skills training program; and, it would use more effectively funds from the national defense function of the budget to accomplish its objectives.

I invite my cosponsors of H.R. 5540 to rejoin me in sponsoring H.R. 13 and I invite those of my colleagues who were not on that bill to get on board this year. The country needed this legislation last year, but is even more critical now. ●

INFORMATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1983

HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 1983

● Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Information Science and Technology Act of 1983." Joining me as cosponsors of this bill are the chairman of the Committee on Science and Technology, DON FUQUA, and DOUG WALGREN, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology in the 97th Congress. This proposed legislation is an updated version of a bill I introduced in the 97th Congress, H.R. 3137. In May and June of 1981, the Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology, on which I serve, held hearings on the bill. The subcommittee's recommendations and an analysis of the hearings prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) are available through the Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology.

Since I introduced this legislation 2 years ago, the computer has continued to gain importance in our society. Last week, for the first time ever, Time magazine chose a machine, the computer, to be "Man of the Year." During these last few years, many people have devoted a great deal of time and effort to determine the best mechanism for developing an information policy. At the request of the Science and Technology Committee and other committees, the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) recently

completed several studies on informational technology and public policy issues. These studies include "Informational Technology and Its Impact on American Education," "Computer-Based National Information Systems: Technology and Public Policy Issues," and "Implications of Electronic Mail and Message Systems for the U.S. Postal Service." The hearings, the OTA reports, and the continued rapid advances in information science and technology have convinced me that the United States must strive to develop a coherent information policy.

The Institute for Information Policy and Research, as established by the bill I am introducing today, is one of several alternatives for creating a forum for the development of a comprehensive information policy. The Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology is soliciting suggestions for other means to achieve the same goal. I would like to thank those experts who have already provided comments on this subject. My purpose in reintroducing this bill in an essentially unmodified form is to provide a vehicle for continued discussion. Mr. Speaker, I welcome any comments on the general goal of the best means to develop an information policy and on the particular approach outlined in this bill. When we have gathered those comments together, we will be revising this bill and proposing other legislation as necessary and appropriate.

I would like to include here an excerpt from the subcommittee's recommendations following the hearings on H.R. 3137. These recommendations demonstrate the increasing need for an information policy as we advance into the "information age."

RECOMMENDATIONS ON H.R. 3137

(NOTE.—Excerpt from "Report Prepared by the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, for the Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology. Transmitted to the Committee on Science and Technology, U.S. House of Representatives. Ninety-seventh Congress, Second Session. Serial DD. June 1982.")

The United States is continuing a rapid transition from an economy based on industrial production to one based increasingly on information products and services. Information and the ability to access it quickly and reliably is becoming a vital source of political and economic power. The products of microelectronics technology now permeate virtually every aspect of commercial and industrial activity, and the importance of microelectronics is manifest not only in the dollar value of information products and services themselves, but also in the central role played by information technology in increasing productivity and promoting innovation in other sectors of industry and commerce.

Important as these economic consequences are, the impact of the Information Revolution will also be felt in many ways that are difficult to measure in dollars and cents. Decisions about development and applications of information technology will have a major influence on the pattern and quality of American life for many years to come.

The Information Revolution is rooted largely in American scientific and technological leadership, but foreign governments have been quick to recognize the economic and social challenges posed by the transition to the information age. A number of our major trading partners have responded with active programs designed not only to enhance their competitive positions in international trade, but also to train their citizens in the effective use of information technology. The stakes are high in this information game, and we ignore at our peril the importance which our competitors now ascribe to their information industries and to the development of widespread computer literacy in their societies.

UNITED STATES RESPONSE TO THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION

From the testimony received on H.R. 3137 and on the broader issues prompting its introduction, it is clear that the Federal Government is having a difficult time developing a coherent strategic view of how our transition to an information society should take place. A consensus on the proper scope of "national information policy" does not yet exist in this country. The important contribution of commercial and not-for-profit enterprises, combined with the Government's inclination to defer to the marketplace in information activities, requires a unique approach to policy development in the United States. However, there appear to be at least three major problems in the present decentralized approach to information issues:

1. Lack of coordination among agencies charge with information responsibilities and between the public and private sectors;
2. Inadequate attention at high levels to the broad changes in many economic, technical and social sectors which may be triggered by information technology; and
3. Lack of investment of human or financial resources to insure that our Nation makes best use of new technological developments both domestically and in our competitive trade position.

COORDINATION

Responsibility for Federal research, development, and policy activities concerned with information is widely dispersed throughout the Executive Branch, and there appears to be no adequate mechanism for developing and promoting an integrated approach. This inadequacy is most obvious in the areas of international information policymaking; scientific and technical information (STI); and the general question of public and private sector interaction.

In each of these areas what appears to be lacking is a systematic approach to information technology and its uses which could assemble and focus the collective insights of different agencies and the private sector, and plug them into the policymaking process. It is particularly difficult to provide objective analyses of long-range concerns under the present institutional and bureaucratic constraints within which agencies deal with their various portions of information policy. In the absence of a strong coordinating mechanism, important decisions with great potential impact are sometimes made with little or no involvement of groups with relevant expertise. For example, the recent landmark settlements made by the Justice Department with AT&T and with IBM were made with virtually no contribution from the Federal information and telecommunications policymaking apparatus.

HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION TO INFORMATION CONCERNS

Information is part of the life blood of any institution or organization. There is a strong tendency to take information and the tools used to process it for granted, and to think of them as ancillary to the real business at hand. Nowhere is this more apparent than at the high levels of the United States Government, where officials, beset with performance demands and operating with diminishing resources, have generally not accorded a high priority to information issues.

The United States is probably unique among developed nations in not having any clearly designated Cabinet-level official with primary responsibility for information and communications issues. Given this situation, it is essential that leadership in information issues be forthcoming from the agencies and individuals with statutory or designated responsibilities in these areas. The Congress should make clear to high-level officials with these responsibilities that it regards the development and application of information technology as an issue deserving high priority.

RESOURCE LEVELS

Although the Subcommittee acknowledges the need for budget stringency, it has serious concern about underinvestment in precisely those areas which have most promise of yielding great future economic returns. Information products and services represent one of the fastest growing areas of the United States economy, and our future economic success and national security depend heavily on the continuing development and application of new microelectronic technology. The long-term consequences of deep budget cuts in this area, including in particular the loss to key Government agencies of highly skilled policy professionals, will be to weaken our ability to adapt and use the fruits of the Information Revolution.

SUMMARY

Information and communications technologies are still in a rapid stage of development, and this development will be a dominant feature of the next decade. Ensuring the efficient and humane use of this technology raises many difficult public policy issues. Existing mechanisms appear to be incapable of generating and sustaining the kind of government-private sector cooperation that is essential to maintain United States leadership in world information markets and to maximize the potential benefits of microelectronics and communications technologies. The Subcommittee believes that rapid improvements are needed.

Mr. Speaker, there are several ways to approach the issues summarized above. The "Information Science and Technology Act of 1983" addresses these issues in the following manner.

SUMMARY OF BILL

Information and communication technologies are still in a stage of rapid development, and this development will be a dominant feature of the coming decade. The Information Science and Technology Act establishes an Institute for Information Policy and Research, with a lifespan of 10 years. This independent institute in the executive branch would be a transitional mechanism to facilitate our Nation's evolution toward a society based increasingly on information products and services. This mechanism would make possible cooperative interests, and State and local governments, for the productive and humane use of infor-